Parks Use Assessment 2012

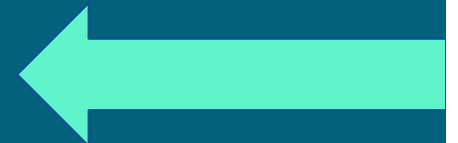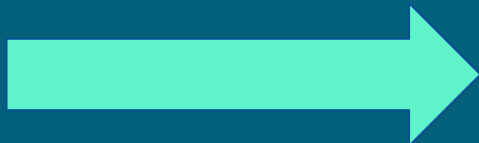## Hermosa Vida

Lisa J. Hardy, Ph.D.

Parks Use Assessment

- Kresge Foundation Safety Net Enhancement Initiative (SNEI) awarded to North Country HealthCare 2010 & 2011-2013

- Team
  - Research Project Lead - Lisa Jane Hardy, PhD
  - Researchers -Chelsea Kuiper, MA, Julio Quezada, Marty Eckram, Jessica Peterson, Bianca Borbeck, Mara Pfeffer, Colleen Trout, Jeffery Hawkinson, Michelle Thomas, MA, and Hendrik de Heer, MPH, PhD

Hermosa Vida

Increasing access & decreasing barriers to healthy living

Hermosa Vida

Connectedness:
Closing the gaps

Hermosa Vida

The social determinants of health are the *conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age…*

These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities - the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries.

Hermosa Vida – A Beautiful Life

Increasing access to healthy living for *everyone*.

Connectedness

Hermosa Vida part I (2010)

- Assets

  Parks, Gardens, Aquaplex, Rec Center, Community leaders, community residents, historical connectedness, active youth.....

Hermosa Vida part I (2010)

- Built Environment Barriers
  - Fences
  - Gates
  - Locks
  - Other physical barriers
  - Disconnect between built environment & social use of space

Hermosa Vida part I (2010)

- Social barriers
  - Fear of crime
  - Public intoxication
  - Immigration policy
  - Social divisions

Hermosa Vida part II (2012)

- Who is excluded and why?
- What changes might facilitate greater access?
  - How can we help to facilitate greater connectedness between people and the community assets/spaces in Flagstaff?

Hermosa Vida part II (2012)

- Three part methods design

    - I Built environment – PARA tool
    - II Social use of space – observation and mapping
    - III Knowledge and use patterns - survey

Social division

- What deters people from using community spaces in Sunnyside?
  - Fear of crime
  - Fear of "drunks in the park"
  - Feelings of not being welcome
  - Lack of knowledge about parks
  - Perception that he space is "not ours"

Findings

- Exclusion = Health disparities
- Connectedness = healthy communities for all

  - Where do we see exclusion and what does it look like?
    - Often lines are drawn between those who should be in the parks and those who should not
      - "Legitimate users"

Findings

- Built Environment
  - BMX Park
    - Extensive signage, fences and gates, broken emergency phone, places to hide, graffiti
  - Bushmaster
    - Sidewalks defining dead grass/low use versus green grass/high use

Findings

- Social exclusion
  - Bushmaster
    - Fear of crime (unsafe perceptions and high crime rate)

  - Coconino fields
    - "Stink eye"

  - Ponderosa
    - Groups, public intoxication

- Bushmaster skate park
  - Gender

Findings

- Lack of knowledge
  - Survey results
    - "Never heard of" – Izabel garden, Motalvo, BMX park
    - "Never been there" – Skate park, dog park, Killip Fields, Coco

Social Cohesion

- What encourages people to use spaces in Sunnyside?
  - Welcoming events
  - Ease of use
  - Safety
  - Eyes on the park

Findings

- Ponderosa Park
  - Community events such as the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association Candlelight Vigil, Fiesta de Mayo, etc.

- Izabel garden
  - Handmade sign is not vandalized, people out working

- Bushmaster grassy areas
  - Major use and care during summer

Findings

Top five most valued activities

Trash cans, Walking

Spending time with friends/family

Taking children to play

Sidewalks

Least valued activities

Tennis courts

Spending time at night

Taking a nap

Drinking alcohol

Smoking cigarettes

Findings

Lower income

Lighting at night

Spending time at night

Security guards

Celebrating friend/family holidays

Walking through on my way somewhere else

Higher income

Skateboarding

Working out

Playing disc golf

Riding a scooter

Running/jogging

Findings

- Most used community spaces
    - Buffalo, Bushmaster, Ponderosa, Killip fields, Aquaplex, Rec Center, Izabel garden

- Desires that would increase use
    - Better lighting, more social events, more time

- Highly ranked activities
    - Trash cans, spending time with family, taking children to play, sidewalks

Recommendations

- Gardens & Murals
  - Social use, community-engagement, homemade

- Community-engagement processes
  - Clear and available signage

- Equip check out
  - Low cost equipment

Recommendations

- Hosted events
  - SNA model in Ponderosa

- BMX park modification
  - Social use of space more closely aligned with built environment

Recommendations

- Night activities
    - After dark, monitored activities in public
    - Lighting where possible
    - Eyes on the park where possible

- Policy and procedural changes to support community engagement

Conclusion

- Flagstaff has many strong and beautiful assets

- Efforts to decrease physical and perceived barriers could potentially impact health disparities

- We recommend continuing with processes of community-engagement that seek to reach deeply into the community and impact/involve those people who are most in need